

COLUBER SUBOCULARIS BROWN, 1901 (REPTILIA, SERPENTES) :
PROPOSED VALIDATION UNDER THE PLENARY POWERS.
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By Hobart M. Smith (*Department of Zoology and Museum of Natural History, University of Illinois, Urbana, Illinois, U.S.A.*)

Following the then-accepted practice of regarding secondary homonyms as unavailable, Smith in 1941 proposed the new name *Elaphe sclerotica* (Copeia 1941 : 135-136) as a substitute for *Coluber subocularis* Brown, 1901 (= *Elaphe subocularis* as of 1917 *et seq.*), a secondary homonym of *Bascanion suboculare* Cope, 1866 (= *Coryphodon mentovarius* Duméril, Bibron and Duméril, 1854, placed in the past fifty years by some in *Coluber* and by others in *Masticophis*, but first referred to *Coluber* by Garman, 1883, *Mem. Mus. comp. Zool.*, Harvard 8 : 42, 147). In the interest of nomenclatural stability such a name would not now be changed, and the change would not be countenanced by the 1961 Code. Nevertheless the 1961 Code makes it clearly implicit (Art. 59) that any secondary homonym rejected and replaced before 1961 on grounds of secondary homonymy can never be revived, with the understood exception of those names preserved by the plenary powers of the Commission. Accordingly, by the automatic provisions of the 1961 Code, *sclerotica* is the proper name for the species previously known usually as *subocularis*.

2. Since 1941, however, *subocularis* has continued in almost universal usage ; only two references to the species employ the name *sclerotica*. Prior to that time there had been no deviation in usage of *subocularis*. Furthermore, there is no likelihood that *Coluber subocularis* of Brown would under any circumstance ever be confused with *Bascanion suboculare* of Cope, since they have always, even by the most extreme lumpers, been regarded as representing different genera. It is, therefore, clearly in the interest of stability of nomenclature that *Coluber subocularis* Brown be preserved in its present sense.

3. Accordingly it is here requested that the Commission :

- (1) declare under the plenary powers that the specific name *subocularis* Brown, 1901, as published in the binomen *Coluber subocularis*, shall not be invalidated by its senior secondary homonym *Bascanion suboculare* Cope, 1866 ;
- (2) to place the specific name *subocularis* Brown, 1901, (*Proc. Acad. nat. Sci. Philad.* 1901 : 492) as published in the binomen *Coluber subocularis*, holotype Acad. Nat. Sci. Philadelphia No. 13733, on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology ;
- (3) to place the specific name *sclerotica* Smith, 1941, as published in the binomen *Elaphe sclerotica* (a junior objective synonym of *subocularis*, *Coluber*, Brown, 1901) on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names in Zoology.